

Message Text

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PAGE 01 RANGOO 00268 010301Z

20

ACTION EA-14

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NSAE-00 RSC-01 SNM-02 SY-10 TRSE-00 USIA-15 NSC-10

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R 010105Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7644

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

UNCLAS RANGOON 0268

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR BM

SUBJ: NARCOTICS - TRIAL OF LO HSING-HAN

REF: RANGOON 172

1. SUMMARY. TRIAL OF OPIUM TRAFFICKER LO HSING-HAN CONTINUED WITH TESTIMONY BY ARMY OFFICERS WHO OPERATED AGAINST HIM FOLLOWED BY HIS FATHER AND SAI DU WHO WAS CAPTURED WITH HIM. LATTER DESCRIBED LO'S ALLIANCE WITH SHAN INSURGENTS AND CLAIMED LO HAD PLANNED TO SEEK POLITICAL ASYLUM IN THAILAND. SAI DU ALSO ALLUDED TO PRESENCE OF "AMERICAN" PHOTOGRAPHERS WITH SHAN INSURGENTS (REFERRING TO BRITISH TV JOURNALISTS). LO'S YOUNGER BROTHER WAS RELEASED FROM DETENTION JANUARY 29. END SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING CONCLUSION OF TESTIMONY AGAINST LO BY HIS YOUNGER BROTHER LO HSING-MIN (REFTEL), FIVE BURMA ARMY OFFICERS TESTIFIED JANUARY 23 CONCERNING OPERATIONS BY THEIR UNITS AGAINST LO'S FORCES AFTER LATTER WENT UNDERGROUND, IN MAY-JUNE 1973. THEY DESCRIBED UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 RANGOO 00268 010301Z

CLASH NEAR LASHIO MAY 14 AS WELL AS OPERATIONS MAY 30-JUNE 3

AGAINST COMBINED FORCE OF LO'S KOKANG KKY, IBMND, SHAN INSURGENTS, AND LOIMAW KKY HOLDING SOVIET MEDICS, AFTER WHICH MOST OF THE INSURGENTS MOVED TOWARD THAI BORDER. THE ARMY OFFICERS WERE SHARPLY CROSS-EXAMINED BY PX'S DEFENSE COUNSEL DR. E MAUNG, IN ATTEMPT TO DISCREDIT THEIR TESTIMONY AS HEARSAY.

3. LO'S FATHER WAS NEXT WITNESS, FOLLOWED BY YANG KUEIKYI, DESCRIBED AS "HEAD OF ECONOMIC SECTION" OF LO'S KKY. BOTH DESCRIBED NEGOTIATIONS WITH GUB LEADING UP TO THEIR ACCEPTANCE OF DISBANDMENT, AND LO/ GOING UNDERGROUND, 8, APRIL 1973.

4. ON JANUARY 30, SAI DU AKA SAI HKAI, WHO WAS CAPTURED ALONG WITH LO, TESTIFIED. SAI DU IS 29-YEAR-OLD SHAN WHO SERVED AS PERSONAL ASSISTANT TO SHAN STATE ARMY LEADER KHUH KYA NU. HE DESCRIBED OROGIN AND OPERATIONS OF SSA AND ITS POLITICAL ARM, THE SHAN STATE PROGRESSIVE PARTY, MENTIONING SSA LIAISON OFFICE AT CHIANG MAI AND ITS CONTACTS, THROUGH A THAI POLICE OFFICIAL, WITH RTG. SAI DU SAID THAI AUTHORITIES "GAVE NO TROUBLE" TO SSA PERSONNEL IN THAILAND.

5. HE WENT ON TO RECOUNT DETAILS OF MEETING JUNE 29, 1973, AT MONG MAU, BETWEEN LO, HIS FOLLOWERS, AND SSA. MEETING, HE SAID, ACCEPTED LO AS CHAIRMAN (AND SOURCE OF FUNDS) OF COMBINED SHAN STATE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL, COMPRISING INSURGENT KKY, SSA, AND IBMND. KHYN KYA NU WAS DETAILED TO APPROACH RTG TO GRANT ASYLUM TO LO ON CONDITION THAT HE CEASE OPIUM TRAFFICKING. KHUN KYA NU LEFT MONG MAU FOR THAILAND JULY 8, FOUR DAYS BEFORE GUB ATTACK WHICH DISRUPTED INSURGENT CONCENTRATION AT MONG MAU AND SENT LO AND SAI DU FLEEING INTO THAILAND WHERE THEY WERE CAPTURED. HE ADDED CLAIM THAT DURING HIS INTERROGATION BY THAI POLICE, HIS INTERROGATORS EXPRESSED OPINION THAT A LIBERATED SHAN STATE SHOULD JOIN THAILAND.

6. SAI DU ALSO TESTIFIED CONCERNING PRESENCE OF TWO "AMERICANS" WITH SSA "SINCE EARLY 1972". HE SAID THEY PAID KHUN KYA NU 300,000 BAHT FOR RIGHT TO FILM INSURGENT AND SMUGGLING ACTIVITIES. THEY REACHED MONG MAU IN MAY 1973 AND LEFT FOR THAILAND WITH KHUN KYA NU JULY 8, 1973. COMMENT: THE "AMERICANS" WERE OF COURSE BRITISH TV JOURNALISTS ADRIAN COWELL AND CHRISTOPHER MENGES. UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 RANGOO 00268 010301Z

7. NEXT HEARING IN LO CASE IS FEBRUARY 6.

8. IN RELATED DEVELOPMENT, LO HSING-MIN WAS RELEASED FROM DETENTION JANUARY 29 FOLLOWING CONCLUSION OF HIS TESTIMONY AGAINST HIS BROTHER. PRESS REPORT OF RELEASE NOTED THAT LO HSING-MIN HAD OBEYED GUB ORDER DISBANDING KOKANG KKY. LACEY

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